

FA290 TOUCH SCREEN: CONTEMPORARY MOVING IMAGE PRACTICES

Seminar Leader: Sophie Lee
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Office Hours: Tues 9 - 12.15 or by appointment

Course Description

Daily life unfolds via the glow of the screen. As the auto-fictive turn merges with the ascendance of an attention economy we are all tasked with narrating our lives in real-time. Experience becomes content, subjectivity our cultural and social capital. What impact does this have on artists' moving image practices? What new vernaculars emerge from the primacy of the screen, and how do new forms of distribution shape different encounters with video? In this course we will consider how video's proliferation in everyday life imbues the medium with a particular urgency, and seek to find euphoric new ways of making accordingly. We will consider the use of autobiography and performance in moving image, looking here to the legacies of queer and feminist filmmaking practices. This is a hands-on, participatory course spanning somatic exercises, costume making and experimentation with sound in addition to the video assignments. Individual enquiry will be paired with explorations of radical modes of collaboration, allowing us to challenge traditional notions of authorship. We will look at contemporary artists working with moving image and contextualise these works within existing legacies of experimental filmmaking. We will also draw on a wide range of other sources including cultural theory, poetry, fiction, music videos and Hollywood cinema in our bid to give form to what it feels like to live now. The focus of this course will not be on technical instruction, but rather on providing students with the conceptual and aesthetic tools with which to develop their own artistic language, and to bring their own works from idea to realisation.

Class viewing material is subject to minor change.

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class time.
- Initiate appointments with the Professor or arts staff outside of class time.
- Always allocate extra time for work preparation and clean-up for independent production.
- Respond to emails from their professors in a timely manner.

- Inform their professors at the beginning of the semester if photos of student's identity, artwork, works in progress are NOT to be taken and / or used for Bard College Berlin.
- Remove all artworks, art materials, and / or any personal belongings before the end of the semester. Failure to remove works or return spaces clean and empty may result in final grade penalization. Donating unrequested artworks and / or art materials is not permitted and will still be considered student property, expected to be removed by your inspection deadline. Please contact Studio Arts Manager Joon Park for more information: j.park@berlin.bard.edu

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

Assessment

Touch Screen: Contemporary Moving Image Practices is a hands-on, participatory course structured around workshops that move through varying aspects of thinking and making. Students will be assessed on their active participation and contribution to these workshops.

There will be three, smaller video / audio assignments leading up to a larger, final video assignment. Students are required to complete all assignments. Sketches, rough cuts and preparatory work are an essential component of the work, and must be presented in order to receive a final grade. In addition to collaborative classwork students must be ready to undertake independent work, with grading also taking into account adequate time planning and the management of assignments that require several stages of production.

We will use discussion and critique to reflect on a wide range of moving image works and texts, as well as to review assignment works. Students will be assessed on participation in class discussion and their ability to communicate with the course leader as well as amongst themselves.

Responsible use of Bard College spaces and cleaning up after sessions will also be taken

into account in the final grade.

Policy on Late Submission of Artworks / Presentations

Assignments (artworks, essays, performances, oral presentations) that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (Example: B+ becomes C+). The Professor is not obliged to accept assignments that are more than 24 hours late. Where a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Grade Breakdown

Communication and class participation: Communication with seminar leader, in class and via email, and among other students; attendance, engagement in class workshops, in class work, critiques and conversations and maintenance of all common and private spaces used for production / rehearsal:

30 %

Coursework: Three shorter video / audio based assignments

35%

Final project: Finished longer video work; preparatory work / sketches / rough cuts / research

35 %

Key Assignments:

1. 'Post-cinematic Affect' Reading - Due Feb 7
2. Home Video - Due Feb 14
3. Haptic City - Due Feb 21
4. Surround Sound - Due March 5
5. Introduction / destruction / haste (Final Project) - Due March 28, April 18, April 25, May 2

Schedule

NB: There will be a full day workshop on Saturday March 11 from 11 - 5pm. There will be no class, therefore, on March 14 and April 11.

Week 1: Jan 31

"Post-Cinematic Affect"

- Introduction to course, working methods and themes. How does the screen structure the experience of everyday life? What does this *feel* like?
- In class reading and discussion of Shaviro text. Defining and unpacking key terms: post-continuity; post-cinematic; affect; subjectivity.
- In class viewing: Martine Syms, Camille Henrot, Charlotte Prodger; excerpts from 'Spring Breakers' (Harmony Korine), 'Southland Tales' (Richard Kelly)

Assignment 1: Re-read '*Post-Cinematic Affect*' excerpt, come up with your own examples of the post-cinematic for discussion in next class.

Week 2: Feb 7

Home Video: Politics of the Domestic

- Recap 'Post-cinematic affect', short discussion led by assignment examples.
- Class discussion: the diaristic, the intimate, the politics of domestic space.
- In class viewing: Moyra Davey, Phung-Tien Phan, Tiphonie Mall, Chantal Akerman.
- Mandatory in-class facility orientations

Assignment 2: 'Home Video'

Week 3: Feb 14

Excesses of the screen: moving image and embodied experience

- Review of assignment 'Home Video'
- Class discussion: In what ways do film and video engage the senses? What do we understand by the term 'embodied'? What types of awareness are useful for a filmmaker?
- In class viewing: Mark Leckey, Pauline Curnier Jardin, Tobias Zielony.
- Workshop 'Haptic/Somatic': Turning on the senses with visual, aural, tactile, olfactory and thermal stimuli

Assignment 3: 'Haptic City'

Week 4: Feb 21

Auto-fiction

- Review of assignment 'Haptic City'
- Class discussion: auto-fiction in literature and moving image. Readings from 'The Book of Margery Kemp', a 15thC. text speculated to be the first autobiography, and essay 'New Notes on Long Narrative' (Robert Glück)
- In class viewing: Frances Stark, Steve Reinke, Jessyca Hauser, Josiane M. Pozi

Assignment 4: 'Surround Sound'

Week 5: Feb 28

Feelings in surround sound

- Class discussion: What roles do intuition and rhythm play in the video editing process? How can we draw parallels in the musicality and associative logics present in both poetry and moving image? Reading from poems 'The Cinema of the Present' (Lisa Robertson).
- In class viewing: Leslie Thornton, James Richards.
- In class sound and editing workshop using materials from assignment 'Surround Sound'

No assignment

Week 6: March 7

Real and staged emotions, entangled

- Class discussion: How do artists bring lived relational and emotional material together with elements of fiction? Exploring approaches to performance: melodrama, stylisation, identification, alienation.
- In class viewing: Jack Smith, John Cassavetes, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Leila Hekmat

No assignment

Week 6: Saturday March 11, 11h - 17h

Institute for Scene Experiments

All day workshop with artist Nikhil Vettukattil: radical collaborative filmmaking, deconstructing the scene; the film crew as social form.

Week 7: March 14
No Class

Week 8: March 21

- Review of Institute for Scene Experiments workshop
- Introduction to final assignment: 'Introduction / destruction / haste'

Assignment 5: Sketches, Mood boards, Scripts, Concepts, Production Plans (due March 28)

Week 9: March 28

- Review of sketches, mood boards, scripts, concepts, production plans
- In-class costume-making workshop.

Assignment 5: First cut 'Introduction / destruction / haste' (due April 18)

Spring break: Apr 4

Week 10: April 11
No class

Week 11: April 18

- Review first cut 'Introduction / destruction / haste'

Assignment 5: Second cut 'Introduction / destruction / haste' (due April 25)

Week 12: April 25

- Review second cut 'Introduction / destruction / haste' (one-to-ones)
- Collaborative poster making for screening

Assignment 5: Final cut 'Introduction / destruction / haste' (due May 2)

Week 13: May 2

- Final review + critique (Online)

Week 14: May 9

- In class preparation for final screening, programming of videos, film introductions and presentation

Screening May 12

Facility Guidelines:

“The Factory” – Eichenstrasse 43

The Factory Policy Agreement

- 1) “The Factory” at BCB (Eichenstrasse 43) has space and facilities available to BCB students with an academic purpose for using the building. Mandatory in-class orientations are required to retain chip access to the Factory. Chip access to The Factory is from 7am to 10pm everyday during the semester. At 10pm students will be asked to leave the building by BCB security personnel.
- 2) Students agree to only use the common spaces that are available for their needs, and must respect private spaces that are off-limits. For requesting to reserve the dance / theater space and / or Seminar Room 6, please fill out the online [Factory Reservation Form](#). The Factory Staff will get back to you within two weekdays. (Monday - Friday).
- 3) No smoking is allowed anywhere inside the building. There are to be no projects using open flames (such as candles, torches, lanterns, fireworks, etc.) inside any part of the building.
- 4) Fire exits and lanes must be kept clear of any obstructions.
- 5) Spray painting and handling of any hazardous (chemical or combustible) material is not allowed inside the building. Contact the Studio Arts Manager concerning working with these materials. All work surfaces (indoor and outdoor) must be properly protected with a drop cloth or a packing paper provided by the workshop.
- 6) No sandals, flip-flops, or bare feet will be allowed inside the workshop and studio 6.
- 7) Students must make sure all lights are turned off and doors are closed when leaving the building. No windows or doors are to be left opened or cracked. All electrical items must be unplugged when not in use.
- 8) If BCB workshop tools must be borrowed for a purpose outside of the building, please contact The Studio Arts Manager (by appointment).
- 9) There are to be no architectural changes to studios or any areas inside or outside of the building without first speaking with the Studio Arts Manager.
- 10) During completion week, any space used by a student must be returned empty with clean walls and floors. All garbage must be bagged (or boxed) and properly disposed of. Final grades may be penalized and / or fines imposed if items are left (or renovations unfinished) by the inspection deadline.
- 11) Contact Studio Arts Manager directly with any questions: j.park@berlin.bard.edu

AV Facilities – Platanenstrasse 98 (downstairs)

- 1) BCB's AV (Audio / Visual) facilities provide a limited quantity of AV equipment to

support those students enrolled in arts classes that require specific items. AV facilities do not include any black and white or color printing services for students.

- 2) The opening times may change every semester to adapt to specific course times and social distancing conditions. Borrowing equipment is currently implemented by scheduling an advance appointment through this link: <https://janinaschabig.youcanbook.me/>
AV facilities are ONLY available during days when classes are held (closed during official BCB holidays).
- 3) All items checked out are due back during AV hours the following day, unless other arrangements have been made in advance directly with AV Staff.
- 4) Items to be reserved on a specific date should be requested at least one week in advance. Without reservation, availability is limited to a first-come, first-serve basis.
- 5) The AV Staff may exclude students from borrowing items at any time, if the student:
 - failed to return items in time
 - failed to return items in person (pick up and/ or return by friends is not allowed)
 - returned items with missing pieces
 - returned items damaged or in poor shape
- 6) AV equipment will be given out only to those students responsible in organizing, picking up as well as returning their items IN PERSON. No exceptions.
- 7) All items returned late, regardless of patron's position at BCB, will be subject to a 1 Euro fine, per day.
- 8) Any item returned without accessories (such as cables, SD card, batteries, tripod head, lens cap, etc) will be subject to a 1 Euro fine, per day (the same as late returns).
- 9) Any items missing will be subject to patron reimbursement for its value (or under special circumstances, replacement, at the discretion of AV Staff). Any items damaged or malfunctioning are expected to be reported to Staff upon check-in.
- 10) Please use the AV email to inquire about equipment or policy, as well as to reserve (av@berlin.bard.edu). Do not contact AV Staff through their personal emails.
- 11) We strongly suggest personally visiting the facilities to inquire and reserve before borrowing equipment!
- 12) AV equipment is limited at BCB. Whenever possible students are encouraged to use their own devices (computers, cameras) for production purposes.
- 13) Contact AV Staff directly with any questions: av@berlin.bard.edu

Photo Darkroom Facilities – Platanenstrasse 98 (downstairs)

Computer Pool and Media Lab – Kuckhoffstrasse 24 (upstairs)

** Guidelines to be offered during orientations.